

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITY
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
U.S. SENATE

CONCERNING
PROMOTING SAFE SKIES THROUGH SCANNING AND SCREENING:
OVERSIGHT OF AIR CARGO SECURITY

PRESENTED
FEBRUARY 24, 2020

Ranking Member Markey, on behalf of the Massachusetts Port Authority, thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Security, and for your ongoing commitment to innovation in aviation security. As the Director of Aviation at Massport, I'd like to welcome you to Boston Logan International Airport. We are honored to host this important hearing, and look forward to discussing ways to enhance the security of air travel.

At Massport, safety and security is our number one priority. As New England's most critical transportation infrastructure, moving people and cargo around the world, Massport is committed to addressing the security challenges of today and preparing for the threats of tomorrow. The dynamic nature of today's security threats—both physical and cyber—present an ever-changing environment for Massport and our partners worldwide. Working with our federal partners, state and local emergency responders, and the greater airport community, we continually enhance and refresh our approach to emerging risks in order to maintain the highest level of safety and security at all of our facilities.

An informed, vigilant, and engaged airport community is—and always will be—our greatest asset in identifying potential risks. Education and engagement is a critical component of our overall safety program, which is based on lessons learned, real-world experiences, and best practices that are part of the safety and security culture here at Massport. Most notably, since the tragedy of September 11th, Massport has implemented an aggressive program of smart and focused security initiatives to strengthen defenses against potential threats. Starting on the afternoon of 9/11/2001, and continuing nonstop for almost 20 years, each and every day at 8:30 in the morning leadership from Massport, the airlines, law enforcement agencies, contractors, vendors and federal partners convene to discuss topics of current significance and set the

priorities and actions for the coming day. The *Security Briefing*, as we call it, is not just about what happened in the past 24 hours and what is upcoming in the next 24 hours; it is an opportunity for the airport community to connect with peers and partners face-to-face. Whether it's coordinating a response to the Coronavirus outbreak, sharing intelligence on global security issues such as the death of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, or discussing solutions to evolving cybersecurity issues, Massport is leaning forward aggressively to help keep our employees, business partners, and the traveling public safe.

Many other airport management teams have looked to Boston as a model, and have sought to establish a *Security Briefing* for their respective airports; however, no other airport in the United States has been able to match our track record on a day-in and day-out basis. Of significance to me personally, each and every stakeholder has the chance to participate and listen to the discussion, ask questions, and take back information to share with their organizations from a single source of truth and authority. This diverse group of professionals providing expert perspectives and facts instills confidence, and is a powerful reminder of our mission every day. This is only possible due to the widespread commitment by every stakeholder involved, and their willingness to be fully engaged as participants.

The *Security Briefing* has created an enduring network within our airport community, and has vastly strengthened the landscape of the Airport. As an example, Boston Logan was selected as a TSA Innovation Task Force site in 2017. Through this program, the most advanced security technologies are tested in the field at participating airports. Working with the TSA, Massport deployed Automated Screening Lanes (ASLs) at almost every checkpoint at Boston Logan, significantly improving the screening process.

Today, Boston Logan International Airport is the premier airport for the greater Boston metropolitan area, as well as the international gateway for much of New England. Logan's economic impact is estimated by the state to be more than \$16.3 billion annually. In 2019, more than 42 million passengers traveled through Logan Airport to one of our 137 nonstop destinations, comprised of 79 domestic and 58 international markets. Boston Logan is not only the gateway to the world for travelers, but it also helps power global commerce by moving a diverse and growing mix of cargo throughout the globe. In 2018, 334,000 metric tons of cargo passed through the airport. Of that, 132,000 metric tons were international, and over 90% is belly cargo transported on passenger aircraft.

Although belly cargo provides a great amount of flexibility for shippers, we are cognizant that terrorist organizations have tried to bypass passenger screening by sneaking explosives in cargo holds on commercial jets. In 2010, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula was able to mail explosives hidden in a printer cartridge as cargo aboard a Qatar Airways passenger plane. We commend the leadership of Senator Markey and others in Congress who helped pass legislation ensuring 100% of cargo transported on passenger aircraft is screened, per Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regulations. This was a critical step in protecting the aviation industry. As a result of this law, the TSA created the Certified Cargo Screening Program (CCSP). This has allowed TSA-certified air cargo screening facilities and vetted shippers to screen air cargo earlier in the supply chain. The facilities screen cargo using TSA-approved

methods and chain-of-custody measures. The CCSP has been instrumental in ensuring cargo on passenger planes meets the screening standards mandated by law so that belly cargo does not become the soft underbelly of our aviation defense measures. Our passengers and flight crews expect it, and deserve it.

We also know terrorists also have tried to exploit security loopholes in cargo-only flights. The so-called Islamic State terrorist group in 2017 was able to ship explosives from Turkey to Australia as part of a foiled plot.ⁱ Massport supports rules by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) requiring the screening of cargo transported on cargo-only aircraft by June 2021. According to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Aerospace Forecast Fiscal Years 2019-2039 report, cargo-only carriers make up nearly 80% of the revenue ton-miles.ⁱⁱ Enhancing security on cargo-only flights will protect more lives in the air and on the ground. An important means of meeting that requirement is the use of TSA-certified third-party canine screening. Utilizing third-party canine screening allows airlines to inspect cargo without impeding the pace of commerce, and Logan is on track to implement this screening method.

Moving cargo around the world in a safe and secure manner is a shared responsibility throughout the entire logistics chain. In order to have confidence in the shared responsibility system, we must have confidence in the people who are part of the system. Identifying threats from within—both on and off airports—is a key component of that. Massport served on the Aviation Security Advisory Committee's Insider Threat Subcommittee, which provided recommendations to the TSA Administrator on insider threat best practices. We fully support those recommendations and encourage the TSA to adopt those standards.

As the volume of passengers and cargo continue to increase, another challenge airports face is keeping pace with the infrastructure investment requirements needed to safely and securely move cargo. The FAA Aerospace Forecasts report alsoⁱⁱⁱ predicts that U.S. airlines will reach 1.3 billion passengers in 2039, and nearly double the cargo traffic as measured by revenue ton miles. Airport operators need the support of our Federal partners to help us build modern and efficient facilities. Increasing the cap on the Passenger Facility Charge is critical to our ability to meet increasing demands. Massport also supports legislation championed by Senator Markey that would ensure the September 11th Security Fee goes to its intended use – improving security at our airports via our partners at the TSA, instead of allowing Congress to reallocate those funds for other purposes.

At Massport, our mission is to safely, securely, and efficiently connect Massachusetts and New England to the world. Massport supports our partners, particularly the TSA, CBP and air carriers, in their efforts to enhance security procedures across all of our facilities and for all cargo types. Through strong relationships with our partners, keen awareness and mitigation of security threats, Massport strives to have the safest airports in the world. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in front of the subcommittee today. I would be glad to take any questions.

ⁱ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-australia-security-raids/islamic-state-behind-australians-foiled-etihad-meat-mincer-bomb-plot-police-idUSKBN1AJ367>

ⁱⁱ https://www.faa.gov/data_research/aviation/aerospace_forecasts/media/FY2019-39_FAA_Aerospace_Forecast.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.faa.gov/data_research/aviation/aerospace_forecasts/media/FY2019-39_FAA_Aerospace_Forecast.pdf